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The book provides a clear account in simple language of the geological and physiographic development of the earth as far as the existence of plants and animals is affected. It gives a wealth of description of the plant and animal life in the Great Lakes region, supplying both the common and scientific names. These descriptions are accompanied by excellent illustrations, the book containing more than four hundred and fifty figures and drawings. It provides, therefore, a useful nature-study guide for field work by teacher and class.

The use of the book will not be limited to the nature-study group. The following quotation shows the author's purpose in this respect:

It is hoped the volume may serve as an advanced general science, particularly for those teachers who believe that science instruction at its best is an attempt to interpret the significance of the commonplace. It craves audience, too, of all those nature-lovers who desire an introduction to the study of the things about them as one means of culture. The several type regions are treated in separate chapters, so that one may take it as a companion to the Dunes, the forest, the prairie, the river valley and learn by means of the brief descriptions and illustrations to identify the plants, animals, and physiographic processes encountered, and appreciate something of their meaning [p. ix].

The book is published in pocket size with limp leather cover, which will add to its usefulness as a field guide. It provides a wealth of concrete material which the teacher of nature-study will be able to use to excellent advantage.

Improving rural life.—President Roosevelt once declared that our civilization rests at bottom on the wholesomeness, the attractiveness, and the completeness, as well as on the prosperity of the country district. Since the appointment of his Country Life Commission in 1908 there has been an increasing interest in country-life problems, an increasing improvement resulting from it. Mr. MacGarr's book¹ emphasizes especially the social phases of rural life and is addressed especially to preachers, teachers, and those public-spirited citizens who are particularly interested in the problems relating to the betterment of the general condition of rural social life. The author's attitude is represented in his own words as follows:

Rural improvement means developing a better people—more intelligent, more capable of appreciating those finer things that lead to culture, more patriotic in the deep and genuine sense; not merely "raising more corn to feed more hogs to buy more land to raise more corn." The farmer is of more consequence than the farm. . . . Farmers are middle-class people, neither enervated by luxury nor crushed by poverty. . . . The country people must depend upon themselves to solve their problems. . . . Teachers and clergymen are among the natural leaders in rural betterment [p. 10].

¹ LLEWELLYN MACGARR, *The Rural Community*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1922. Pp. 239.

In contrasting rural and city life it is shown that for the same income a person can live in the country more comfortably and independently than in the city, and that the young people who go to the city only too often become servants, policemen, and street-car conductors, or fill other subordinate positions which they would be glad to give up in order to return to their comfortable homes. But youth is fascinated with the whirl of city life and realizes too late the really greater freedom of the rural community. There should be, however, a mutual appreciation of the interdependence of rural and urban communities.

The purpose and uses of rural surveys are clearly set forth in chapter iii with rather careful instructions as to the conduct of such surveys. The suggestions for the kind of information to be gathered in surveying the rural district are detailed, and there are maps and forms illustrating how to arrange and visualize the results of a survey.

Chapter iv treats of the chief characteristics of the rural community, physiographic, political, social, industrial, and religious. This is followed by a chapter on the discovery and treatment of the socially defective individuals, such as the mentally subnormal, the paupers, juvenile delinquents, and degenerates. In his treatment of rural school problems in chapters vi and vii, the author's point of view is modern and progressive. The problems of city and country school work are different, and city school systems are generally receiving much more attention than those in the country, but when we realize that 62 per cent of the children of America are educated in rural schools it is clear that, viewing our national life as a whole, we should turn our attention earnestly to the improvement of rural educational opportunities. Several things are necessary if we are to have this improvement. Among these are the following: teachers, supervisors, and county superintendents who are specially trained for rural work; courses of study adapted to rural conditions; and properly equipped school plants. There should be thoroughgoing consolidation of secondary schools and the introduction of good agricultural and home-arts courses. The district and high schools and their plants are the natural centers for the various constructive social forces in community life. Here might be the libraries and the headquarters for university extension work, farmers' institutes, and clubs for men, women, and young people.

At the end of each chapter the author has gathered a rather generous and useful list of reference books and articles and a list of stimulating questions for further investigation and study. Any club using the book as a basis of discussion would find an unlimited number of suggestive topics.

F. B. WARNER